

Testimony to the Appropriations Committee
In Support of Funding for After School Programs

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I have a question for you all. After we are dead and gone, what type of leaders will our children become? What kind of dreams will they make into realities? What kind of man will these boys grow into? What kind of woman will these girls develop into? These aren't the type of questions that academic advisors or English and math teachers answer or even guide our children with. Who pushes these kids to dream? Who teaches them social change without it being just a study in the text book, but a practice of life? I can answer that; us. The after school believers are the ones who help form these children to become not only successful in life, but into amazing people who have purpose in life.

I started a program at Cooperative Arts and Humanities High School titled Worldwide. This program specializes in allowing students to develop character, principle, and purpose through the Hip Hop arts. It made them think beyond math and English, but about themselves. It challenges their minds to find out who they are. It makes them see how wonderful and miraculously and how beautifully they originally were created to not be a duplicate of any other being on this planet. It makes them strive in uncomfortable ways of thinking, work hard at a new talent, bolder to tell the world who they are. I've led these followers of mine to a role of leadership.

What happens to our cities if our children find out their purpose in life? What happens to our schools if our kids become leaders at early ages? What happens to our country if these teenagers never give up on themselves? Miraculous things people, miraculous things will unfold if we give our leaders of tomorrow more guidance with our after school programs.